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Metro keeps getting bigger

READERSHIP Metro Ottawa readers gave us the highest market increase of any paper in the Ottawa market, according to results released yesterday by NADbank.

The Newspaper Audience Databank's 2009 readership results said daily readership increased by 32 per cent, or 19,500 readers, to 81,000.

The results also said Metro Canada now reaches 1.3 million daily and 2,764,500 weekly readers coast to coast.

The 2009 results represent an increase of 142,900 daily readers and 285,500 weekly readers. Metro Canada reaches more adults than the Globe and Mail and National Post combined.

"The local market results are reflective of our continued distribution and editorial focus, as seen in ... the highest increases in the market in Vancouver, Calgary and Ottawa," said Bill McDonald, group publisher for Metro English Canada.

METRO OTTAWA

Style pg 18

Return of the clog

On the web
Visit metronews.ca for news updates

Heart and Crown **Honorary O'Briens**

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

Mayor Larry O'Brien celebrates St. Patrick's Day at the Heart and Crown with a group of Algonquin College students who all became honorary O'Briens for the afternoon. Sunny, summer-like weather led to big crowds dressed in green filling pubs in the ByWard Market and on Elgin Street. More St. Patrick's Day coverage, page 8

Reining in sex offenders

MP revives bill to bolster national registry, DNA databank

TRACEY TONG
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Canada's public safety minister has reintroduced legislation to strengthen the National Sex Offender Registry and the National DNA Databank.

During a press conference at the Ottawa police headquarters yesterday, Vic Toews announced proposed amendments to ensure convicted sex offenders are automatically included in the registry and are required to provide a DNA sample to the database.

The legislation would also enable police to use the registry to proactively prevent crime, not just to investigate crimes after the fact.

"This is not the case under the current law," Toews said. "At present, the Crown must apply to have an offender registered and the presiding judge has the discretion, but is not required, to make such an order. The legislation will eliminate this process and make registration automatic upon conviction."

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Minister of Public Safety Vic Toews announced proposed legislative amendments to strengthen the National Sex Offender Registry and the National DNA Databank yesterday.

RCMP files state that 42 per cent of those who should be on the registry are presently not included, Toews said. Fourteen per cent of offenders reoffend within five years, he added.

The legislation would also require offenders to provide information on their vehicles, including the licence plate number, make, model, body type, year of manufacture and colour.

Police would also be able to notify foreign or other Canadian police when high-risk offenders are travelling in their area, and offenders must report details of their employment, volunteer work and absences from their residences of seven days or more.

Chief Vern White said from a policing perspective, "there's always more that we can do."

The legislation is a result of substantial consultation with victims, their families and law enforcement, among others, Toews said.

Plan limits options for rock climbers

TIM WIECLAWSKI
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GATINEAU Rock climbers will no longer have their pick of spots to scale in Gatineau Park.

While most of the recreational 1.7 million annual users of the park will be unaffected by the National Capital Commission's new Gatineau Park Ecosystem Conservation Plan, rock climbers will see their available walls reduced to three or four cliffs providing 43 different routes. That's down from over 500 routes that are currently available.

The problem is that most climbing walls are also in the Eardley Escarpment, a 20-km stretch that runs along the southern boundary of the park and is home to more than half of the endangered species living in the park.

"In the whole province of Quebec, the place where we have the most densely populated species at risk is on the Eardley Escarpment," said Michael Viens, the NCC's senior director of natural resources.

Protecting and rehabilitating the Eardley Escarpment is one of the top priorities of conservation plan.

The plan also calls for a study to identify and protect the ecological corridors that wildlife use to get in and out of the park.

"Nobody can manage a park without being concerned about what we call the external matrix — what is outside the park," said Prof. Daniel Gagnon, chair of the external expert committee advising on the plan.

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Local

Easter Bunny's last call for pet pix

This weekend is the last chance to have your pet photographed with the Easter Bunny. The Easter Bunny will be at the Westgate Shopping Centre Friday and Saturday to raise funds for the animals at the Ottawa Humane Society. He'll be sitting from 1 to 8 p.m. on Friday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday. All animals should arrive for their visit in a carrier or on a leash. METRO OTTAWA

Scan this code or text LOC to 82442 for local news.
See the Local page to learn how to scan.

Ottawa River Summit in Aug.

ENVIRONMENT The Ottawa Riverkeeper and the National Capital Commission are holding a one-day summit to bring leaders together to discuss the health and future of the Ottawa River and its tributaries.

The Ottawa River Summit, to be held on Aug. 27, will encourage First Nations leaders, elected officials and municipal staff from communities in Ontario and Quebec to share information, experiences and successes, and to work co-operatively on river-related issues.

The current overview of the Ottawa River, key watershed projects and opportunities for collaboration on research and monitoring will all be discussed.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

metronews.ca
What's online today.

Video As the loonie chases down the U.S. dollar, many experts think parity will be here for the long haul at **metronews.ca/canada**

Lotteries

Lotto 6/49: 5, 6, 21, 38, 42 & 45. Bonus 46
Ontario 49: 13, 20, 25, 34, 35 & 38. Bonus 36.
Ontario Pick 3: 8 3 4; **Ontario Pick 4:** 0 1 8 2
Encore: 5468202
Daily Keno: 3, 19, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40, 41, 44, 47, 48, 49, 53, 54, 55, 60, 64, 65.
These results are not official.

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Students get feel for street life

Campaign seeks to raise awareness of plight of homeless

TIM WIECLAWSKI
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When the sun is shining and friends stop by with a Tim Hortons coffee every few hours, five days on the street is not too bad.

Camped outside the University Centre at Carleton University for the week, Jessica Karam, Eric Berrigan and Mike Fleming know life is much harder for people who are actually homeless.

That's why they are trying to help.

"It's never been a question that I am going to eat at night. I know I'm going home to my bed. People should realize that's a gift, and not everyone has it," said Karam, 21.

As of last Sunday, the trio of Sprott School of Business students has spent their nights and days on the sidewalk in front of the campus bookstore as part of a 5 Days for the Homeless campaign. Participants from across the country must live outside for five days without purchasing any food, using a mobile phone or even taking a shower.

Sunday night started in the rain but since then, the group has basked in unseasonable warmth. Their friends have been stopping by with coffee and campus security comes by to make sure they're OK.

The experience is very different for youth on the street who have to hide from security guards if they want to sleep at night, said Fleming, 20, who volunteered for the campaign because several of his friends had experienced homelessness while he was growing up.

Berrigan said it was surreal waking up yesterday morning as a herd of students streamed into the University Centre for morning classes.

"Unless people stopped, they were just on a mission to do their own thing, but there's been a lot of support and people asking what we're doing," Berrigan said.

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

Carleton University Sprott School of Business students Eric Berrigan, left, Jessica Karam, centre, and Mike Fleming, right, lounge in the sun outside the University Centre yesterday. The three students are taking part in the 5 Days for the Homeless campaign, that has students from across the country living outside for five days without purchasing food, using a mobile phone or taking a shower.

Fundraiser

- In Ottawa, the three students hope to raise $5,000 for the Rideau Street Youth Enterprises and Operation Come Home before tomorrow. Donations can be made to them directly or online through 5days.ca or at any TD Canada Trust branch in the city.

Trio nabbed for robbery by plainclothes cop face more charges

TRACEY TONG
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COURT Three people face charges, with more pending, after a bank was robbed on Alta Vista Drive Tuesday.

Just after 11 a.m., two males, one armed with a firearm, entered a bank in the 2700 block of Alta Vista Drive and demanded money. The men fled in a vehicle with an undisclosed amount of cash.

At approximately 11:27 a.m., a plainclothes Ottawa police officer observed a suspect vehicle in the area of Brewer Park and arrested three people, who police believe may have been involved in other bank robberies. Additional charges are pending.

Normand Oscar Sigouin, 47, of Gatineau, faces three counts each of robbery and pointing a firearm and one count each of wearing a disguise, conspiracy to commit an indictable offence and use of a firearm in a commission of an offence.

Christine Karen Osside, 45, of Ottawa, is charged with three counts of robbery and one count of conspiracy to commit an indictable offence and Andre Omer Mayer, 51, of no fixed address, is charged with three counts of robbery and pointing a firearm, two counts of failure to comply with a probation order and one count of wearing a disguise and conspiracy to commit an indictable offence.

All three appeared in court yesterday.

Ex-addict has new life in year's time

MISSION Last fall, D'Arcy Pierce celebrated his graduation from a five-month addictions program at the Ottawa Mission.

The Ottawa resident was down and out, fighting mental illness and a 25-year addiction to alcohol when he landed at the Mission just over a year ago. Wanting to change his life, he entered and graduated from the addictions program.

D'Arcy Pierce

To some, that may sound like a happy ending. But for Pierce, it was just the start. Yesterday, the 42-year-old celebrated his graduation from the Mission's six-month maintenance training program, making him the organization's third graduate.

The hands-on maintenance program taught Pierce skills including flooring, drywalling, basic electrical work and plumbing.

While Mission staff will help Pierce find a job when he is ready, he's hoping to further his education.

"I'm looking to possibly go back to college, maybe even university," he said.

"For the people who take advantages of the services that are provided, we get really good results," said Virginia Hodgson of the Ottawa Mission.

"I want people to know," Pierce said, "that you can come to the Mission, and that they're offering this and that you can change your life, if you want to."

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

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Chamber music festival tapped as top event
Festivals and Events Ontario has named the Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival as one of the province's top events. METRO OTTAWA

National Arts Centre **Sound and fury**

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Greer Grimsley as Macbeth and Brenda Harris as Lady Macbeth rehearse a scene from Opera Lyra Ottawa's Macbeth, Giuseppe Verdi's opera about the perils of ambition, love and treachery, yesterday. Macbeth opens at the National Arts Centre March 27.

Krav Maga takes hold

Local to bring self-defence system to kids, teens

TRACEY TONG
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A local self-defence instructor recently named the national director for Krav Maga in Canada has become the first — and only — Canadian instructor certified to teach children and teenagers.

And that's something Laurent Mougeot intends to do.

The Maniwaki resident, who currently teaches two classes a week in Ottawa, will begin offering, for the first time in Canada, classes for teens aged 12 to 16 this spring.

A self-defence technique employed by the Israeli army, the FBI and the Los Angeles police, Krav Maga is rapidly growing in popularity here in the capital.

> **"In most assaults, people get attacked by more than one person."**
> Laurent Mougeot

Using moves based on the body's natural reflexes, Krav Maga teaches people how to survive confrontation, Mougeot said.

Recently, there have been a number of swarming cases in Ottawa, he said.

"In most assaults, people get attacked by more than one person," he said. "They have four or five people to get the upper hand."

Krav Maga, said Mougeot, "teaches people the best way to escape and basic principles on how to align your opponents to take one person on at a time, so they can disable the opponent very quickly and escape."

Eighty per cent of martial arts students are children and teenagers, said Mougeot. And while children usually don't have to face the same issues as adults, Krav Maga for children will teach safety, self-awareness and how to deal with bullies and harassment, he said.

News in brief

CAMPAIGN Kitchissippi Coun. Christine Leadman has registered to run for city council again. There is already one candidate, Katherine Hobbs, signed up to challenge her. Leadman is in her first term on council. Before winning her seat on council, Leadman was the executive director of the Westboro Business Improvement Area.

MUSEUM An exhibit at the Canadian Museum of Civilization has been held over due to popular demand. Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures continues through April 25. Nearly 60,000 visitors have seen the exhibit — which has already been to Paris, Turin, Amsterdam, Washington, Houston, San Francisco and New York — since it opened. METRO OTTAWA

Why settle in Gatineau?

Lower costs? Better services? Should you make the move?
This week, we break down the numbers and weigh the benefits to find out where a better quality of life may reside.

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What if you had identified a really important health issue but didn't quite know how to address it? What if you weren't focusing on the right issue? This can be the case whether you are a researcher, a community agency or a community member. Health researchers and communities are recognizing the value of working together to study health issues that affect communities, such as homelessness, HIV/AIDS and poverty. They are establishing collaborative partnerships as they develop, implement and analyze the results of research projects. This work leads to a better understanding of the community, better research and, ultimately, better health outcomes. Working together produces lasting solutions that fit with communities, and citizens like *you* play a critical role in the research process. Come learn more about ways in which you can get involved in health research in Canada.

Experts:

Ms. Susan Flynn
Director, Research and Program Development
Planned Parenthood Toronto

Ms. Marion Wright
Chair, Ottawa Alliance to End Homelessness
CEO, Canadian Mental Health Association (Ottawa Branch)

Dr. Tim Aubry
Professor, School of Psychology
Senior Researcher, Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services
University of Ottawa

Dr. Sarah Flicker
Assistant Professor
Faculty of Environmental Studies
York University

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Canada

Detainees could still be tortured: Civil rights lawyer
Paul Champ, who represents Amnesty International Canada, told MPs yesterday detainees handed over to Afghan authorities by Canadian soldiers are still at risk of torture. THE CANADIAN PRESS

5

Canada

No end in sight as loonie flies higher

The high Canadian dollar appears to be here to stay despite what the Bank of Canada or inflation do to impact the currency.

Economists say the loonie, which jumped past 99 cents US yesterday, could hit parity at any time. And unlike two years ago when the currency fell off the parity perch against the U.S. greenback as quickly as it had climbed, this time there will be no sudden retreat.

Under normal circumstances, Friday's inflation numbers should provide a downward draft to the loonie's flight.

The consensus of economists is for inflation, which hit 1.9 per cent in January, to fall all the way back to 1.4 per cent in February's data.

That won't matter, however, says TD deputy chief economist Craig Alexander.

He says the markets have already priced in that inflation will be low going forward, as they have that the Bank of Canada will likely move well before the U.S. Federal Reserve in raising interests rates.

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A Canadian dollar sits on top of its American counterpart in this file photo. The high Canadian dollar appears to be here to stay despite what the Bank of Canada or inflation does to impact the currency.

Whether the loonie is slightly below parity, at parity or a little above, Alexander says the key point is that Canadians should expect the currency to remain strong for some time.

Also pushing up the currency is the perception that Canada's resources-based economy will continue to benefit from high oil and mineral prices.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ScanLife

RCMP documents put René Lévesque in "suspected Communist" club.

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Pot the drug of choice in Canadian army: Tests

STUDY Marijuana is the illegal drug of choice in the Canadian Forces, according to the first random tests of the entire military.

Almost one in 20 Forces members — 4.7 per cent — "recently" used illicit drugs, says the newly released study based on random urine samples. And the vast majority were using some form of cannabis, with cocaine, morphine and codeine far behind.

The survey results are based on 1,327 mandatory urine samples taken randomly, without prior notice, among all three services and across the country. Refusal to provide a urine sample could result in disciplinary action.

Previous illicit-drug surveys in the Canadian Forces had concentrated on smaller populations in one of the branches, or among key military professionals such as submariners or divers.

But to establish a broad baseline, the Canadian Forces carried out its widest survey yet, between Feb. 2 and April 6, 2009. Mandatory urine samples were demanded "at unpredictable times and without prior notice."

However, the samples were "blind" in that the identity of the individual tested was not recorded, and therefore no sanctions could be applied.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Traces can linger

- Marijuana can be detected in the urine weeks after use, depending on how much is ingested and how frequently it has been taken.

News in brief

SUMMIT The federal Conservative government is poised to spend $166,500 on a decorator for this year's G8 and G20 summits, even as it clamps down on spending in the face of a record deficit. The Foreign Affairs Department has posted notice of a sole-source contract, saying it intends to hire Bruce Forster, a Vancouver interior designer who has decorated several of Canada's previous summits. Forster is supposed to arrange for Canadian art and furnishings at the summit dinners and events.

EMERGENCY Some First Nations in northern Manitoba have declared a state of emergency and are looking to the federal government for help after mild weather turned their winter roads into quagmires. Grand Chief David Harper said the Shamattawa and Red Sucker Lake reserves have declared a state of emergency, while stockpiles of fuel and food in more than 20 other communities are dwindling.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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18-year-old wanted for anti-Semitic vandalism

Calgary police have issued a Canada-wide warrant for young man who spray-painted various anti-Semitic messages. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quebec **Chart attack**

JACQUES BOISSINOT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Action Democratique du Quebec Leader Gerard Deltell holds up a copy of the organization chart of the health ministry, during question period yesterday at the Quebec legislature.

Report calls for greener Alberta oilsands mining

A report says the Alberta government isn't doing enough to ensure underground oilsands miners use the most environmentally friendly practices.

"Industry and government aren't doing everything they can to mitigate environmental impact," said Simon Dyer, one of the authors of the study, released yesterday by the Pembina Institute. "If we do a better job, that's going to benefit the industry and Canada's reputation."

The environmental think-tank is the first to examine projects that recover bitumen through deep underground wells. It found a wide range of environmental performance between different companies. The study also suggests in-situ sites aren't necessarily cleaner than large open-pit mines usually associated with the oilsands. In-situ projects, on average, emit more than twice as much carbon dioxide as open-pit mines.

They also release more acid rain-causing gases, such as sulphur and nitrous dioxides. And when the impact of the natural gas they use is considered, in-situ projects disturb almost as much land.

The institute reviewed 2007 data to examine nine different in-situ projects in both commercial production and pilot stages, and used 17 different environmental criteria, including emissions, climate change, land and water impacts, and general environmental management.

The results

- Nine different projects were graded.
- The average grade was 44 per cent.
- The highest score went to Suncor's Firebag project, with 60 per cent.
- The lowest score went to Canadian Natural Resources Ltd's Primrose/Wolf Lake project, with 25 per cent.

The report concludes that if all companies were obliged to adopt best practices already used by some, they could save as much water as is used by about 100,000 Canadians.

Greenhouse gases would be reduced by the equivalent of taking 750,000 cars off the road.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

PM abandons mail fight

OTTAWA The Conservatives have decided those one-page partisan MP mail-outs that tend to wind up in recycling bins may not be worth the fight after all.

A majority of MPs in the House of Commons voted this week to ban mass mailings of "ten-percenters" outside own ridings, directing the Board of Internal Economy to "end immediately the wasteful practice."

The Conservatives argued vehemently against the ban during a day-long debate. As late as mid-afternoon, Prime Minister Stephen Harper was needling the opposition during question period with a response that appeared to suggest he supported the ban — only if it applied to Liberal mailings.

"We will continue to use the program to communicate with Canadians," spokesman Andrew MacDougall said in an email.

Three hours later — after news reports of Conservative intransigence began to circulate — another PMO spokesman, Dimitri Soudas, emailed The Canadian Press to say the "Conservative caucus supports eliminating out-of-riding ten-percenters so long as this restriction applies to all parties." THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

ARCTIC Canada and Russia may be heading for another Arctic showdown. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said yesterday his country will aggressively pursue its Arctic interests. And Canada, which hosts a five-country meeting on Arctic resources this month, insists it will roar on with efforts to assert its sovereignty over the Far North. Canada has also announced a new fleet of Arctic patrol ships, a deep water port, and is expanding and re-equipping the Canadian Rangers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Vatican probes visions of the Virgin at Bosnia shrine

The Vatican has begun formally investigating reported apparitions of the Virgin Mary at the Medjugorje shrine in southern Bosnia. Six youths in 1981 said they had regularly seen visions of the Virgin in the remote village 110 kilometres southwest of Sarajevo. More than 30 million faithful have visited the area since 1981. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Roadworkers find WW2-era shells

Dozens of people were moved to safety from their homes in Moscow yesterday after workers uncovered more than 900 Second World War-era artillery shells beneath a road. The workers stumbled on the cache as they expanded the road in the Russian capital's western region. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World gets green light to party

The world turned a party-sized shade of green yesterday.

It was St. Patrick's Day, the annual celebration of all hues of Irishness.

• **In Dublin,** more than a half-million people lined a three-kilometre parade route. There were dancing troupes from Africa and India, bands from Austria and France, giant insect floats from Spain, and Dubliners dancing with mops and dusters.

The biggest laughs came for man-sized eggs with legs fighting bakers armed with wooden spoons.

• **In New York,** people lined Fifth Avenue a dozen deep for the world's oldest St. Paddy's parade.

Phil Giovanniello, a military police officer on leave from Iraq, smoked a cigar and took in the sea of green.

"This is my first parade," said Giovanniello. "And it feels great."

• **At the White House,** U.S. President Barack Obama met with Irish Prime Minister Brian Cowen.

Obama noted 36 million Americans claim Irish ancestry, adding: "I'm sure more do on St. Patrick's Day." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SCANLIFE

Surrender leads to police breakthrough in Berlin poker heist.

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JULIEN BEHAL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seeing the world through green-coloured glasses: This reveller was among half a million people who turned out in Dublin to watch the annual St. Patrick's Day parade.

Egg raffle sparks protest

ETHICS An U.S. infertility clinic seeking business in Britain has sparked fierce criticism by offering free eggs from a U.S. woman to one participant in a promotional seminar in London.

It is not illegal for Europeans to pay for eggs overseas and infertile European women seeking eggs have travelled to the U.S. or other countries seeking eggs.

"There's something shocking (about) giving away a human product." Francoise Shenfield

The Virginia-based Genetics and IVF Institute was to hold a free seminar for British couples last night and said one participant would win donor eggs.

The clinic's prize is worth more than $10,000.

"There's something shocking (about) giving away a human product," said Dr. Francoise Shenfield, a fertility and medical ethics expert at University College London. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

SEX Steamy text messages have resulted in jail for an Indian couple in Dubai. Officials said the sexual content of the texts suggested the pair were to "commit sin," a reference to an extramarital affair, which is illegal in the United Arab Emirates. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Five nabbed in kidnapping of boy, 5

CRIME Spanish police have arrested five people in the kidnapping of a five-year-old British boy in Pakistan.

More than $150,000 in ransom money was recovered.

Three people were arrested in Constanti, in Spain's Catalonia region, two of whom collected the ransom in Paris, police said.

The other two arrests were made in Paris and they are relatives of the suspects in Spain, police said.

The child, Sahil Saeed, was released Tuesday, almost two weeks after being abducted from his grandparents' house in central Pakistan.

A senior Pakistani provincial official said the ransom was paid for the release of the boy, who is of Pakistani origin and lived in the Manchester area of England. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Cheetahs make a comeback in Angola area devastated by war

Cheetahs have been seen in southern Angola for the first time in three decades since the now-ended civil war devastated the animal's habitat, a conservation group said yesterday. Cheetahs prey on deer and buck that have also returned to the 1.6-million-hectare Iona wilderness area, bordering Namibia. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taliban use fear in bid to regain lost town

Their weapon is fear — and it's paying off.

A month after losing control of their southern base in Marjah, Afghanistan, the Taliban have begun to fight back, launching a campaign of assassination and intimidation to frighten people from supporting the U.S. and its Afghan allies.

At least one alleged government sympathizer has been beheaded.

And there are rumours others have been killed.

Marjah residents have been waking to letters posted on their doors warning against helping the troops.

Marjah, a former Taliban stronghold in Helmand province, 580 kilometres southwest of Kabul, was captured by U.S., Afghan and NATO troops in a three-week assault.

Military commanders believe the Taliban campaign is achieving some success because of questions raised at town meetings:

"Dislocating the insurgents physically was easy. Proving that we're here to stay and to help is a lot harder." Lt. Col. Jeff Rule

Do the U.S. forces want to shut down the mosques and ban prayer?

Will they use lookout posts on their bases to ogle women?

Are they going to take farmers' land away?

"Dislocating the insurgents physically was easy. Proving that we're here to stay and to help is a lot harder," said Lt. Col. Jeff Rule, head of operations for Marines in Helmand.

There are no firm figures on how many Taliban are left in Marjah. But their influence is still felt.

New cellphone towers brought phone service to Marjah a week ago.

But the service doesn't work at night because the Taliban threaten or bribe tower operators to shut off the network.

Some workers on canal-clearing projects have been threatened or beaten by insurgents.

U.S. troops are having some success in efforts to win over influential mullahs by offering to make repairs or install loudspeakers in mosques — work they hope would not be targeted by the Taliban.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former Thai PM flees to Balkans

FUGITIVE Former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, whose supporters are protesting in Bangkok, has arrived in Montenegro, the tiny Balkan state's police said yesterday.

Thaksin is a billionaire businessman who fled Thailand in 2008 ahead of a conviction on a conflict of interest charge for which he was sentenced to two years in jail. Montenegrin police said Thaksin arrived from Dubai on his private jet. They said he has citizenship and they have no legal basis to arrest him.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine **Too many men in government: FEMEN**

EFREM LUKATSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police detain Inna Shevchenko, a member of women's activist group FEMEN, in front of the cabinet office in Kiev, Ukraine yesterday. Dozens of activists were protesting against Ukraine's new all-male government — and demanded posts for women.

Pakistan court charges 5 U.S. men for plot

TERRORISM A Pakistani court charged five young Americans yesterday with planning terrorist attacks in the South Asian country and conspiring to wage war against nations allied with Pakistan, their defence lawyer said.

The men — all Muslims from the Washington suburb of Alexandria, Virginia — pleaded not guilty to a total of five charges, the most severe of which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison, defence lawyer Hasan Dastagir said.

"My clients were in good shape and high spirits," Dastagir said.

The men, all in their late teens or early 20s, were charged by an anti-terrorism court inside a prison in Sargodha, the city in Punjab province where they were arrested in December. They were reported missing by their families in November after one left behind a farewell video showing scenes of war and casualties and saying Muslims must be defended.

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Attackers cut off villagers' tongues in latest Nigeria fighting

Attackers killed 12 people yesterday morning in a small Christian village in central Nigeria, officials said, cutting out most of the victims' tongues in the latest violence in a region where religious fighting already has killed hundreds this year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

GAFFE U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden asked for God's blessing yesterday for the late mother of Irish Prime Minister Brian Cowen — except she is very much alive. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Tuna ban furor grows

Japan, Arab countries argue it would hurt fishing nations

Opposition grew yesterday against a proposal to ban the export of Atlantic bluefin tuna, with several Arab countries joining Japan in arguing it would hurt poor fishing nations and wasn't scientifically justified.

Other countries including Australia and Peru have expressed support for a weakened proposal which is expected to be introduced today at the 175-nation Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, or CITES.

They want the trade regulated for the first time by CITES but not banned outright as demanded by conservationists who contend the Atlantic bluefin is on the brink of extinction.

Killing or even weakening the tuna proposal would be a setback for CITES, which has made the protection of marine species a key goal during this two-week meeting. A proposal for a shark conservation plan was also defeated on Tuesday.

Many poor countries appeared to be leaning toward protecting their economies over conserving the iconic tuna.

"Most Mediterranean countries are afraid because they export this tuna," said Ahmed Said Shukaili, a delegate from the Persian Gulf country of Oman, whose nation will follow the Arab League position opposing the ban.

Monaco — the sponsor of the proposed ban on the export of Atlantic bluefin tuna — says numbers have fallen by nearly 75 per cent since 1957. But most of the decline has occurred over the last decade with demand driven by sushi lovers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One country's fish, another's fry

- Supporters of the ban, including the European Union and the United States, say it is necessary because the Atlantic bluefin is a migratory species that swims from the western Atlantic to the Mediterranean — putting it beyond any one country's border.
- Raw tuna is a key ingredient in traditional dishes such as sushi and sashimi, and the bluefin variety — called "hon-maguro" in Japan — is particularly prized.

Obama gets support of opponent, nuns

HEALTH BILL U.S. President Barack Obama's much-challenged health care overhaul gained traction yesterday as a liberal lawmaker became the first to switch his opposition and Roman Catholic nuns declared their support in an unusual public break with their bishops.

Democratic leaders are hoping to vote on the bill this weekend.

Obama's plan won the support yesterday of Dennis Kucinich, a former candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination. Kucinich had voted against an earlier version of the health bill because it did not go far enough in creating a robust public plan to compete with private insurance.

Meanwhile, leaders of religious orders representing 59,000 nuns sent lawmakers a letter urging they pass the Senate's version of the health care bill. The measure contains abortion funding restrictions that the bishops say do not go far enough.

"Despite false claims to the contrary, the Senate bill will not provide taxpayer funding for elective abortions," said the letter signed by 60 leaders of women's religious orders. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Comment

Machines and the social apocalypse

Relating

After more than a half-century of worries, warnings and studies about what our media habits are doing to us and our relationships, FCC chairman Newton Minow's famous 1961 condemnation of the "vast wasteland" of network TV seems somehow quaint.

The TVs, computers and hand-held screens have since multiplied, enabling us to ignore each other any time and any place. Will we someday envy old-fashioned families who at least used to zone out in front of the same TV screen together, even as the Cassandras of the day prophesied looming social apocalypse?

The dire warnings, now a tradition unto themselves, continue. TV is making us dumb, lazy and distractible. This month's issue of the Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine draws a direct link between the amount of time kids spend in front of their screens and the difficulty they have relating to real people.

Other studies have pointed to bedroom TVs as a cancer on relationships, eliminating family meals and interaction and short-circuiting the sex lives of couples. The more we let the machines into our lives, we're told, the less room there is for people.

Many nights, the denizens of my own apartment (occupancy goes up and down) are firmly sealed in their own bubbles of laptop, iPod and TV, often in combination. Conversation is admittedly sporadic, but the teenagers, as far as I can see, have so far failed to completely degenerate into anti-social blobs.

Paradoxically, even as they seem unaware of each others' presence in the same room, they are often interacting with each other online.

Just how much wholesome family interaction is enough? Sometimes at this age, shutting out one's family for a bit is an entirely desirable enterprise. I just had to do it with comparatively primitive technology like the Walkman. I wouldn't be surprised if bygone alarmists decried Gutenberg's printing press and the creeping effect of literacy on families, with kids' beaks buried in books and other signs of complete societal breakdown.

The grownups in our household, I have to admit, can easily be as plugged in and tuned out as the kids. Many nights when it's just the two of us, we'll notice that we've each been clicking away on our computers and haven't passed a word between us in a couple of hours. We'll often take this as our cue to pull the plug, go out for a drink, sit facing each other and actually talk.

The time to worry is when you shut off all the screens, turn back to each other and find you have nothing to say.

Steve Collins offers his best guesses on relationships for Metro every two weeks.

Views

Prom wars: Out of the mouths of babes

FourthWave

By now you have probably heard about the Mississippi school that cancelled a prom rather than let Constance McMillen, a lesbian student, bring her girlfriend and wear a tuxedo.

Lots of people, straight and gay, are outraged at the school's actions. I'll spare you all the protestation, since it goes without saying the school is in the wrong — oh, never mind, I'll tell you anyway: It cannot deny a couple their coming-of-age ritual because they're gay. Though McMillen clearly understands the social significance of her fight she also seems bored explaining the situation to camera crews, exasperated that trodding on gay rights still happens in 2010.

Young Americans collectively yawn at the mention — among the under-30 set, about 80 per cent believe same-sex marriage is a private decision — so for McMillen and her peers, it's silly trying to explain something that's accepted fact.

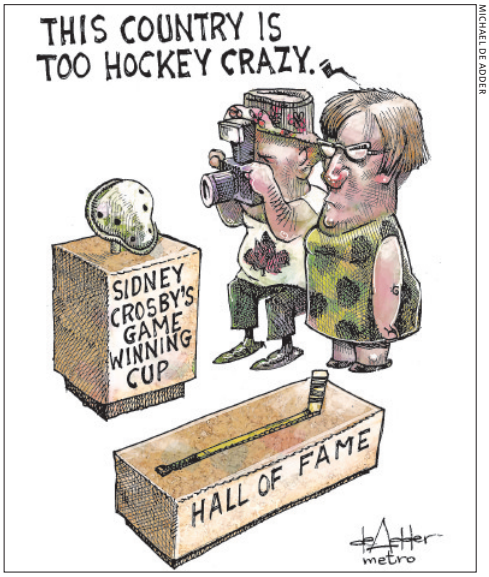
"For you to say that you can't bring someone of the same sex — well, for the gay people that means they can't bring their date," she told the Associated Press. "That's really not fair to the people that are gay."

What a world, in which a teenager makes more sense of what "constitutional rights and liberties" are than the adults charged with teaching her these things. At its core, that's what high school is: A series of life lessons on how to be punctual, polite, committed, ambitious, thoughtful and critical adults.

That's why McMillen sought permission from her teachers. That's how adults deal with life, right? By talking through their differences and confronting tough situations rather than avoiding them, by, say, cancelling a prom like a socially awkward teenager.

McMillen and her girlfriend are examples that courage and maturity can come at any age, and that students aren't the only ones who should learn a thing or two in high school. Like the saying goes, out of the mouths of babes ...

Canice Leung is a former editor of Ryerson University feminist magazine McClung's, copy editor at Metro, ardent feminist and loudmouth.



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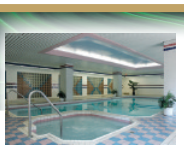
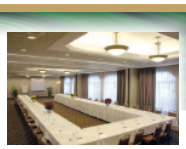
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Telus boosting its infrastructure in Alberta
Vancouver-based telecom company Telus Corp. said yesterday it will invest $650 million to increase both the speed and coverage areas for its current wireless and land-based services in Alberta this year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business

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Geotagging raising concerns

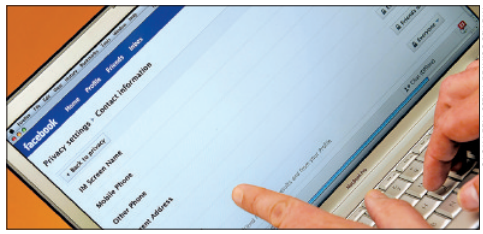
As if knowing what your friend had for lunch wasn't enough, now you can see where she was eating it as well.

An increasing number of websites and social networking services are adopting geotagging, allowing users to include their exact location when they update their status or upload a photo.

Sites like Twitter, Flickr and blog providers enabling users to include their location in whatever they post. Facebook is expected to add geotagging soon.

But privacy experts warn there are dangers in haphazardly broadcasting your location to the world.

Tamir Israel, a staff lawyer at the Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic, says users shouldn't use these services without first thinking about the privacy implications of telling anyone with an Internet connection where they are and where they've been. THE CANADIAN PRESS



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

Facebook is expected to add geotagging soon, allowing users to include their location in whatever they post.

Blockbuster nears bankruptcy

WARNING Shares of Blockbuster Inc. sank 30 per cent yesterday after the video rental chain warned that it may have to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in the U.S.

Competition from DVD-by-mail company Netflix Inc. and DVD vending machines have eroded the Dallas company's revenue even as it staggers under a heavy debt load.

Blockbuster Inc. said in a regulatory filing late Tuesday that it was suffering "significant liquidity constraints," and could have to file for bankruptcy protection if it was unable to convince creditors to restructure a big chunk of its debt or its business continued to deteriorate.

The company also said it is in discussions with "several major studios" to use its Canadian assets as collateral on its payments.

Although Blockbuster's Canadian operations have fared better than those in the U.S., the company said in its filing that its international rental revenues fell nine per cent in the fiscal year ended Jan. 3, due primarily to increased competition and reduced traffic in Canada.

In the same period, international movie sales fell three per cent "with the majority of the negative impact from Canada due to increased low-price competition from big box retailers," Blockbuster said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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World Bank forecasts China growth at 9.5%

ECONOMY The World Bank raised its China growth forecast this year to 9.5 per cent from nine per cent yesterday, but said Beijing needs to cool inflation and possible bubbles in real estate prices.

Premier Wen Jiabao warned Sunday that inflation will be a key challenge as the Chinese government tries to keep a recovery on track. Inflation rose to 2.7 per cent in February, near the government's official cap of three per cent for the year. Analysts expect Beijing to raise interest rates soon as it eases off its stimulus after growth rebounded to 10.7 per cent in the final quarter of 2009. But authorities say easy credit will continue because the global outlook is uncertain.

World Bank economist Louis Kuijs cited rapid rises in real estate prices and growing debt for the investment arms of local governments.

Washington and other trading partners are pressing Beijing to ease currency controls that have kept its yuan steady against the dollar for 18 months to help exporters compete amid weak global demand. Many analysts expect the government to gradually raise the yuan's value this year but to keep control over exchange rates.

"China's economy held up well in the global crisis, and the growth prospects for this year and next year are quite good," Kuijs said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

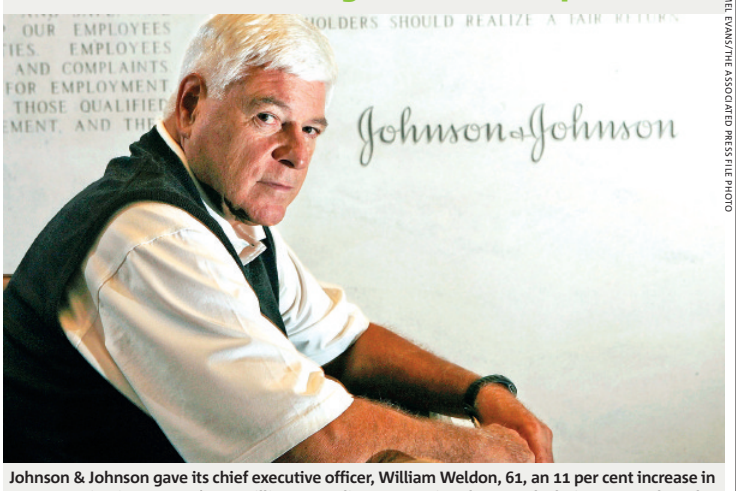
Three killed at Barrick Gold mine

MINING Barrick Gold Corp. has suspended activities at a mine in Tanzania after three workers were killed in a cave-in. The world's biggest gold miner said the workers died when part of the Bulyanhulu mine collapsed Tuesday.

The company said it will keep the mine's operations shut down until today.

Although operations will resume afterward, Barrick says the immediate area of the cave-in will remain closed throughout its investigation. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Johnson & Johnson CEO gets more compensation



MEL EVANS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

Johnson & Johnson gave its chief executive officer, William Weldon, 61, an 11 per cent increase in compensation in 2009, to $25.5 million, according to Associated Press calculations, even though the health-care products giant cut thousands of jobs and saw its annual revenue decline for the first time since the Depression. In November, Johnson & Johnson announced plans to eliminate about 8,000 jobs globally. But the company's stock performed well last year, rising 7.7 per cent.

Transcontinental profit increases

PUBLISHING Transcontinental Inc. swung to a profit in the first quarter despite lower revenues as it confirmed it will receive more than $100 million US in net proceeds from the sale of its U.S. direct mail business.

The Montreal-based company earned $27.9 million during the period ended Jan. 31, reversing a year-ago $6.4-million loss after realizing the benefits of a cost-cutting program.

The major publisher and printer said its net earnings amounted to 32 cents per share, versus a loss of eight cents per share in the same period a year before. Adjusted profit, stripping out one-time items, was $25.3 million versus a year-earlier $15.1 million.

"I attribute our strong performance to four main factors: continued customer confidence in our products and services, the reorganization and sale of some of our operations, the rationalization plan that we quickly implemented last year, and the concerted efforts by our employees to develop greater efficiency," president and CEO Francois Olivier said in a statement.

Revenues were down 11 per cent to $559.3 million. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business in brief

ENERGY Oil prices topped $82 US a barrel yesterday after crude inventories grew less than expected last week, and the stock market rose on the Fed's promise to keep interest rates at record lows.

Benchmark crude for April delivery was up 51 cents to $82.21 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration said crude inventories rose last week by a million barrels to 344 million barrels. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Woolstencroft wins second gold

Lauren Woolstencroft has her second gold medal of the Paralympic Games. The 28-year-old alpine skier from North Vancouver, B.C., won the women's standing giant slalom by more than seven seconds yesterday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sports

Bolt to run 300-metre race

Jamaican sprint star Usain Bolt, left, will compete in the rarely contested 300-metre race at the traditional Czech Golden Spike meet in May. Organizers said yesterday that Bolt, who holds the world record at 100 and 200 metres, will attempt to break the world mark in the distance May 27 in Ostrava. Michael Johnson holds the current mark of 30.85 seconds. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Using cocaine 'huge mistake': Texas manager

BASEBALL Texas Rangers manager Ron Washington admitted he made a "huge mistake" when he used cocaine and failed a Major League Baseball drug test last season.

In his first public admission, he apologized yesterday for his behaviour, eight months after he told Rangers president Nolan Ryan, who turned down Washington's offer to resign.

Ron Washington

"I made a huge mistake and it almost caused me to lose everything I have worked for all of my life," Washington said at a news conference yesterday. "I am not here to make excuses. There are none."

Washington said he used cocaine only once and called it "stupid" and "shameful."

The failed test was first reported by SI.com.

Washington said he told the commissioner's office and Rangers officials about using cocaine before he had a routine drug test.

"He came forward and said he would resign," Ryan said. "He understood the consequences. We had a lot of discussions and a lot of soul searching on it." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bosh sinks game winner

NBA RESULTS

Hawks 105 **Raptors** 106

VS

Chris Bosh hit the game-winning shot with 2.1 seconds left as the Toronto Raptors rallied to beat the Atlanta Hawks 106-105 last night, ending a five-game losing streak.

The shot was one of the few bright spots for Bosh, who shot an abysmal 6-for-19 and finished with just 14 points and 10 rebounds. The other came in the second quarter, when a layup made him the first player in franchise history to reach the 10,000-point plateau

More importantly, the basket helped the Raptors (33-33) slow their descent down the Eastern Conference standings. Once comfortably in fifth place, the Raps came in having dropped 10 of their last 11 to find themselves clinging to eighth in the conference.

Andrea Bargnani had 22 points and 11 rebounds to lead the Raptors.

Jamal Crawford had a season-high 33 points off the bench for the Hawks (42-24), who had won four straight and 10 of their last 13. THE CANADIAN PRESS

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Raptors forward Andrea Bargnani tries to defend Atlanta Hawks forward Josh Smith last night at the Air Canada Centre in Toronto. The Raptors won 106-105.

Bullpen battle heating up for Blue Jays

BASEBALL With less than three weeks until opening day, the Blue Jays' closer role is wide open.

But no matter how close the battle for the job may be, manager Cito Gaston insists the team will not have multiple closers entering the season. Left-hander Scott Downs and right-handers Jason Frasor and Kevin Gregg are competing head-to-head in an open audition.

"That's one thing that (pitching coach) Bruce (Walton) and I talked about," Gaston said. "We'd like to see these three guys in competition with some good hitters. We're getting to the point where teams are getting down to their club. This week is really going to be a week where they're moving players out and getting their players ready."

The Jays' trio of bullpen amigos have pitched in the same game for four games in a row, but always in a different order, the better to evaluate where they stand against one another. Recall that when Gregg was signed, he was promised a chance to win the closer's role. What better way than this?

"I like the idea of competition; that's what drew me over here," Gregg said after his one shutout inning against the Orioles yesterday, in which his only blemish was a two-out walk. The Jays won 4-1.

"It's an opportunity to be on the field in a role that you want to be in. I think we're slowly working in the stuff, mechanically bouncing ideas off each other." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

ScanLife

Nationals insist release of Elijah Dukes not about off-field issues.

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Sports in brief

GOLF The manager for two-time Masters champion Jose Maria Olazabal says he will pull out of the Masters next month because he is suffering again from rheumatism.

SOCCER Lionel Messi scored twice yesterday to lead defending champion Barcelona to a 4-0 victory over Stuttgart and into the Champions League quarter-finals. Barcelona won 5-1 on aggregate to ensure Spain has one team in the last eight with Real Madrid and Sevilla having been knocked out.

NFL NFL owners will vote next week whether to allow each team a possession in overtime in the playoffs if the team winning the OT coin toss kicks a field goal on the first series. Previously, the game would end whenever either side scores, as what happened in the NFC championship game in January, with New Orleans beating Minnesota a field goal. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

New Jersey 5 Pittsburgh 2
Calgary at Colorado
Chicago at Anaheim

TODAY'S GAMES

Pittsburgh at Boston, 7 p.m.
St. Louis at N.Y. Rangers, 7 p.m.
Washington at Carolina, 7 p.m.
OTTAWA at Atlanta, 7 p.m.
New Jersey at Toronto, 7:30 p.m.
Buffalo at Tampa Bay, 7:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Florida, 7:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Philadelphia at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
San Jose at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
Chicago at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Toronto 106 Atlanta 105
Charlotte 100 Oklahoma City 92
Cleveland 99 Indiana 94
Philadelphia 108 New Jersey 97
Boston 109 New York 97
Orlando 110 San Antonio 84
Dallas 113 Chicago 106
Houston 107 Memphis 94
Minnesota at Utah
New Orleans at Golden State
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Metro Homes

Unique

No two recycled Tall Recycled Glass Vases, handmade in Spain, are shaped exactly alike. Anthropologie, $78, anthropologie.com.

JENNIFER BILL/FOR METRO CANADA

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

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Design nightmare to decor dream

DecorMoment

To a movie buff, a flat screen television can be a beautiful thing; But to a decorator it can be their worst nightmare. Trying to incorporate a TV into a room (especially a small space) can be difficult as it is instantly made the focal point of a room.

If you must live with your television front and centre like I do, then there area few designer rules to follow:

Incorporating a black television into your decor scheme: If the black television is the only black object in the room, then it will stand out like a sore thumb. I suggest adding a few other dark-toned decorative items to the room, like black picture frames, curtain rods, lampshades or small furnishings. The more black that get added around the room, the less obvious our flat screens will be.

Choose the right size television for the room: The screen should be a comfortable distance for viewing. You should sit eight to nine feet away from a 32" screen, 10 to 12 feet away from a 42" screen, 13 to 14 feet away from a 50" screen. Purchase a flat screen television that reflects the size of the room, not your ego, boys!

Hanging the television at regular picture height is too high: The middle of the television screen should be between 42-52 inches from the floor as opposed to artwork, which should be hung at 66 inches (from floor to middle). If you hang your television higher, then you will require an angle bracket to tilt the television to your eye level.

Don't compete with the fireplace: The television should be three to eight inches above the mantel (this rule is the same as if you were hanging a painting or mirror over a mantel too). For good proportion, the television should be approximately 3/4 the width of the mantel. Anything smaller will look puny and anything larger will overshadow the fireplace.

TV stand favourites:

The **Vista pedestal** from CasaLife (casalife.com, $850) turns your flat screen into a modern sculpture. Perfect for small spaces or placing a television in front of window.

The **Country Pine Console** from Sears (sears.ca, $480) is a long, low pine cupboard which will house your television, but also offers up a ton of storage. It will add casual country charm to a room and the extra storage is great.

Designer Tip

The wall that the flat screen hangs on is the perfect wall to paint a focal paint colour.

Deep-toned colours like charcoal grey or chocolate brown will help to create less contrast between the black television and the wall, making the television visually disappear in the room. Dark colours also add drama to the room.

Karl Lohnes is passionate about good decor and wants to help you have a beautiful home; no matter what your budget or style. Catch him on CTV's Canada AM

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With a natural-looking ... basket-weave design, the eco-friendly Enviroblend Planter is manufactured from 55 per cent recycled plastics and 44 per cent natural materials. Canadian Tire, $16.99, canadiantire.ca. JENNIFER BILL/FOR METRO CANADA

To create this regal, papier mache animal head, the Zebra Savannah Story Bust is made of layers of repurposed cement bags, covered with vintage French book pages. Anthropologie, $78, anthropologie.com.

Homes in **Style**

Reduce, Reuse, **ReStyle**

JENNIFER BILL
for Metro Canada

Who says going green can't be gorgeous?

Incorporating sustainable materials into your home's design can make for attractive interiors that take it easy on the environment.

With the green movement continuing to grow and increasing emphasis on eco-friendly products, seeking design elements that use recycled products, redoing existing pieces and consignment shopping is all the rage.

"Companies are offering more products that have that designer look and feel to it and have that eco-friendly feel," says Marc Atiyolil, editor in chief of Canadian Home Trends magazine. "I think it's quite different from what it was 10 years ago. When you said eco-friendly and green, consumers thought ... a back to nature look.

"I'm seeing companies being more innovative and coming up with more designer looks with recycled products."

Many stores today are showing one-of-a-kind eco-friendly art designs from such reusable items as newspapers, magazines, or discarded bottles — meaning less rubbish for the landfill. Atiyolil, whose next issue focuses on green decorating, says many are turning to consignment stores to modify existing pieces. Case in point: Grandma's traditional chair — it might not fit into one's decor, but change around the outdated fabric, reupholster and repaint, and a new piece is born.

"You still have family memorabilia but it now goes in a trendy space ... instead of in your basement with a cover over it," he said.

The Time And Again Bird House, Red Pagoda ($78), is a home for the environmentally conscious flock, handmade from recycled wood and tins. Use it indoors as a quirky adornment or outside as a bona-fide shelter. Anthropologie, $78, anthropologie.com.

The Grey Cabin ($68) is made from recycled tins. Anthropologie, $78, anthropologie.com.

Found objects, trinkets and cast-offs revel in their new role as exuberant participants in the Magpie Chandelier. Each is a bespoke creation crafted by hand of reclaimed materials — recycled plastic, galvanized wire and string. This celebratory fixture was created by the members of the Magpie Art Collective and handmade in South Africa. Anthropologie, $5,000, anthropologie.com.

Light up a room or showcase a favourite object with the Bell Jar Table Lamp. The lamp is topped with a textured cotton shade, with a dome display base of hand-blown, clear recycled bubble-glass. West Elm, $149, westelm.com.

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Continuing series
Check back every Thursday for the Metro Homes renovation page.

How to pay for your home reno

RICHARD WOODBURY
for Metro Canada

When considering how to finance home renovations, the first step should be to get some sound financial advice.

"Any person considering doing a renovation, talk to your bank, talk to your financial institution or whoever you're dealing with," says Craig Bannon, the manager of mortgage specialists for the metro Halifax area with RBC. "Or if you're not dealing with anybody, go find somebody because of all the different options. I think it's important to sit down and get some advice."

Bannon says choosing the right financing option depends on factors such as the cost of the renovations and how much equity people have in their homes.

For smaller renovations, Bannon says people might just use a credit card because of convenience and potential loyalty reward points. Credit cards have higher interest rates (usually between 10 and 20 per cent) so they're "not a long term borrowing solution," says Bannon.

For larger renovations, getting a line of credit or a home equity line of credit (HELOC) are possibilities as well. The biggest difference between the two is the HELOC is secured by the value of one's home, which also means it has lower interest rates.

A HELOC can finance up to 80 per cent of the value of one's home, but it's a little more complicated to make purchases with it.

"The only disadvantage I can think of would be you can't actually go into a store and pay for something with it, but … you can either use your debit card or credit card and just transfer your money over," says Bannon.

Another borrowing option is to refinance one's mortgage, which can usually be done up to 90 per cent of the value of a home. One of the advantages with this is there is a lot of flexibility involved, such as choosing variable or fixed rate mortgages and selecting different term lengths.

The timing is also very appealing.

"No matter what interest rate term you pick now, you're going to beat the 25-year average handsomely," says Barry Rathburn, a mobile mortgage specialist with TD Canada Trust in the mid-Vancouver Island area.

He also recommends people look into the incentives available for energy efficient renovations.

"The energy efficiency not only saves you money in the long run, but there are incentives from the federal government, provincial governments, municipal governments in some cases and financing industry to help you offset the cost of your energy efficiency upgrades," says Rathburn.

For small projects a credit card might be your best option for financing your renovation.

Kitchen reno solutions on a budget

RENOVATING Creating a stylish and appealing kitchen doesn't mean you have to blow the bank. Great looking upgrades and stylish design can be more affordable than you'd think.

Here are five design secrets that will help you achieve an affordable kitchen upgrade:

• **Update the look of your cabinets:** A fresh coat of paint or a new colour on your cabinets can transform a kitchen — giving it a completely fresh look and feel. Some hot colours for 2010 include, ultra-chic red, mint greens, electric blues and cool grays.

• Tip: When painting wood cabinets, choose an oil-based enamel paint for a longer-lasting finish that is easy to clean.

• **Go from boring backsplash to bistro-chic:** Upgrade a backsplash with a few coats of chalkboard paint. This usable chalkboard surface is a playful and interactive way to add personal flare to a kitchen.

• Tip: Chalkboard paint comes in a variety of colours that can fit any kitchen palette.

• **Make the switch to stainless:** A suite of stainless steel appliances is a great way to increase the value of your kitchen — not to mention transforming the overall style. For example, Amana offers sleek, stylish and affordably priced appliance solutions. In fact, for less than $2,000 you can purchase an entire Amana kitchen suite.

• Tip: Look for true stainless steel when upgrading appliances — watch out for wannabes.

• **Showcase personal treasures:** Try framing recipes from a favourite cookbook or cooking photos you have taken in the past — this will transform the kitchen from a functional space to one with individual style.

• Tip: You can find affordable art anywhere.

• **Freshen up:** Adding a punch of colour and the aroma of flowers or herbs in the kitchen brings the space to life. Freshly cut or potted flowers brighten a kitchen and make the space welcoming.

• Tip: Use old water jugs or mason jars as vases for added personal flare.

More affordable kitchen solutions can be found online at Amanacanada.ca.

NEWS CANADA

NEWS CANADA PHOTOS

Ultra-chic red is a colour that's in this year if you're planning on painting, while stainless steel appliances are always a great option in the kitchen.

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Fashion in the prairies

Alberta Fashion Week begins Sunday (until March 27) at the BR& at the Banke. Designers will include Jason Matio, Andrew Majtenyl and Holly Allen. For more information, visit albertafashionweek.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Style

The outdoorsy type

Men are looking to reconnect with nature and embrace their inner athlete this season with sports wear and casual chic looks on the runway. One of the most important ways for men to stay on top of their game is with that key accessory: A watch. Guess' latest Spring 2010 collection embodies this style, offering function and sporty durability. Pictured: Guess yellow band watch, $280, far left, and Guess brown leather band watch, $115, left.

METRO NEWS SERVICE

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Cuckoo for clogs

The iconic '70s shoe is back on runways and on the street

Studded clog, $59, Joe Fresh

Peep toe flower-print and beige Stuart Weitzman clogs, $385 each, available at Holt Renfrew

Lace clogs, $125, Aldo.

HEATHER BUCHAN
for Metro Canada

There's a new footwear craze ushering in spring: Clogs. Yes, that's right, they're back.

But before you choke on your latté while imagining donning a pair of humble Dutch-style all-wood shoes painted yellow, take comfort in the fact that 2010 clogs have been reworked into updated versions.

Those that marched down the runways in New York, Paris, London and Milan, featured luxurious suede and leather uppers, and ranged in styles, from Prada's leather sandal clogs to the stiletto clogs at Yves Saint Laurent, to the studded platform clogs (reminiscent of the '70s disco era) at Chanel.

Christine Carlton, divisional director of accessories at Holt Renfrew, who always has her finger on the pulse of the latest trends, says, "It was definitely everywhere. It's the trend with every brand. The standard is the low wood construction, but many of the designers did create a high heel clog, which is obviously their take on it."

"A clog is very of-the-'70s and we're starting to see a little bit more of that boho chic," says Carlton, adding, "there's always different eras that many designers go back to, and everything has a life cycle, so everything comes back over and over again."

Still, if the clunky look of the clog hasn't sold you on getting a pair for spring, perhaps their wearability will. "It's actually a comfortable shoe because it's a solid wood construction bottom," explains Carlton. Regardless, as Carlton points out, a trend is a trend and clogs are fashionable again.

JACQUES BRINON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ABOVE: Clogs as part of Chanel's spring/summer 2010 ready-to-wear fashion collection.

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Style in brief

FASHION WEEK Up-and-coming designer and sweetheart of the Halifax fashion scene, Katrina Tuttle, will be showing for a second season at LG Fashion Week by L'Oréal Paris in Toronto on March 31 at 5 p.m. Launched in 2007, Tuttle's collections are often influenced by nature, and her fall/winter 2010 collection is no exception. Inspiration for the season came after flying in a private airplane with her father, where she found herself in awe of the rock formations, pools of water and dynamic colours of the forests that can only be seen from an aerial view. Tuttle then translated the scenery and unique viewpoint into her garments' silhouettes, textures, colours and patterns. For Tuttle's fall/winter collection (pictured, right), fashion lovers will see lots of black, gold and grey with pops of green, purple and blue, in charming tailored jackets, chic cocktail dresses and pants made to be worn on the town.

METRO NEWS SERVICE

Hobbit to start filming in June

Ian McKellan has revealed that filming for The Hobbit will finally get underway in June. The actor, who took on the role of Gandalf in The Lord of the Rings trilogy, posted on his website that filming will begin in the summer. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Entertainment

Conan film

Conan O'Brien is in early talks to film a documentary of his 30-city Legally Prohibited From Being Funny on Television Tour, reports Deadline's Mike Fleming. EW.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Earning your Stripes

Under Great White Northern Lights, available on CD and DVD, details The White Stripes' extensive 2007 tour of Canada.

The White Stripes

Album: Under Great White Northern Lights **Label:** Warner
Rating: ●●●●

IF CANADIANS NEED another reason to feel pride post-Olympics, they should pick up The White Strips' new DVD/CD chronicling the group's extensive 2007 Canadian tour. The CD, which can be bought separately, is where the musical meat resides. This disc is amazing to listen to — Jack White gives a shout out to Yellowknife, brings up his cousin on a Cape Breton stage during the song Prickly Thorn, but Sweetly Worn to play bagpipes — and it's a treat to simply know all this was recorded on Canadian soil. The disc covers the Stripes' entire catalogue, and they do it well, with all their gritty, intense rock on full display.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Elizabeth Shepherd

Album: Heavy Falls The Night
Label: Right On Media
Rating: ●●½

STRIVING FOR ECLECTICISM, Toronto-based singer/songwriter/pianist Elizabeth Shepherd incorporates many genres and moods into tertiary full-length Heavy Falls The Night. From the plinky keyboard and jazzy feel of High through What Else with its '70s singer in a beatnik cafe aura to the simplistic rendition of Anne Murray's lilting Danny's Song, there's no lack of diversity. Still, while each track is performed brilliantly and Shepherd's voice is velvety-smooth, the plethora of styles explored would have greater impact were they divided up in bigger chunks: by album, not track. The overall lack of a unifying foundation winds up making Heavy Falls The Night interesting but more esoteric than multifarious.

Keith Carman/for Metro Canada

Crash Karma

Album: Crash Karma
Label: E1 Entertainment
Rating: ●●

IF YOU DIDN'T know it, the '90s are back. And to prove it, Edwin's teamed up with OLP's Mike Turner, Tea Party's Jeff Burrows and Zygote's Amir Epstein to bring back all the sounds we haven't missed. This album is exactly what you think it would sound like — it's classic mid-'90s Can Rock, complete with Edwin's over wrought vocals and Turner's fancy, crunchy riffs. It's hard not to want to listen to this in your childhood bedroom, but we're not kids anymore. It's a bland, unimaginative record with sounds that don't stand the test of time.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Music Twitter

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The Whigs

Album: In The Dark
Label: ATO/MapleMusic
Rating: ●●½

HERE'S A PIECE of advice for all the bands out there — don't go on tour with Kings of Leon. Until the Athens-based trio The Whigs hit the road with the Followill clan the group expertly delivered Replacements-meets-Pixies sounds. On the threesome's new disc the band has gotten brasher, more streamlined and, well, more Kings. It's becoming harder to differentiate the group from all the other rock bands out there, though it's not all a lost cause — Kill Me Carolyn is a frenetic, engaging riff rocker that'll remind you why you got into the band in the first place.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Ghostkeeper

Album: Ghostkeeper
Label: Flemish Eye
Rating: ●●●●½

RECORDED IN A number of public and private spaces and then stitched together as a sound collage, Ghostkeeper's second album is more like a warm, itchy quilt than any sort of Frankenstein monster. Built of Shane Ghostkeeper's varied and sporadic influences, the songs jump back and forth between an off-kilter, folk songwriting style, rickety bursts of indie rock, swampy blues-guitar tangents and a surprising amount of concord between the unpredictable instruments, Shane's whiskey-soaked croak and Sarah Houle's recurring, feverish moan. The album's capricious movements tends to reach overwhelming levels at points, but it's this loose cannon mentality that gives these Albertans their distinction from virtually every other band out there.

Cam Lindsay/for Metro Canada

OT	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 3/18/10	265	353	2	TVO	Super Structures (N)		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		Party Animals		Masterworks		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3	GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	Bones (HDTV PA)		The Office (N)	Tucson	90210 "Girl Fight" (N)		News Hour
	-	-	5	SRC	Virginie (SC)	Infoman (SC)	Enquête (HDTV) (SC)		3600 secondes d'extase (SC)		Le Téléjournal Nouvelles. (SC)		La Zone (SC)
	209	342	6	CHRO	Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N)	FlashForward Mark must meet with a therapist. (N)				(10:01) Private Practice		Comedy Now
	196	311	7	CTV	etalk	Access H.	The Vampire Diaries		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		Flashpoint (DVS)		CTV News
	208	303	8	CBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	The Nature of Things (N)		Love, Hate and Propaganda		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	-	360	9	NBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Community (N)	Parks/Recreat	The Office (N)	30 Rock	The Marriage Ref (N)		News
	117	713	10	TVA	La Série Montréal-Québec		Dieu merci! (HDTV) (N) (SC)		Juste pour rire (SC)		TVA nouvelles	(10:45) Denis Lévesque	
	-	-	11	QS	Big Brother QC	Rire et délire	*Ouragan nucléaire* (2007, Action) Jamie Luner.				L'Attaque à 5 (N)		Big Brother QC
	137	763	12	TFO	Panorama		Qhapaq Nan:	Volt	(9:01) *L'Après-midi de monsieur Andesmas*			Villages	Envers des
	-	362	13	CBS	College Basketball NCAA Tournament, First Round: Teams TBA.					College Basketball			
	216	395	14	OMN2	Family Guy	The Simpsons	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King/Queens	Cold Case
	214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: Special Victims		Community (N)	Parks/Recreat	On Purpose	30 Rock	The Marriage Ref (N)		News
	115	343	16	CFMT	Two/Half Men	The Office	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere V	Omni News:	Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Metropia
	218	345	18	CHCH	*Home Fries* ★★ (1998, Comedy-Drama) Drew Barrymore.				*Empire Records* ★ (1995, Drama) Anthony LaPaglia.				News at 11 (N)
	-	361	20	ABC	Action News	Entertainment	FlashForward Mark must meet with a therapist. (N)				(10:01) Private Practice		News
	512	396	24	CPAC	La Période de questions		Heure polit.	L'Heure politique				Revue	Période-quest.
	651	355	25	CTS	Little House on the Prairie		Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman		100 Huntley Street		Life Today	This Is Day	John Hagee
	-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	Bones (HDTV PA)		Fringe "August"		FOX 2 News (N)		News
	-	-	64	PBS	Business Rpt.	Snowtrails TV	Manor Born	Time Goes By	Murdoch Mysteries		Poirot		Charlie Rose
	205	312	104	CTV	etalk	Access H.	The Vampire Diaries		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		Flashpoint (DVS)		CTV News
news	502	390	26	NW	The Lang & O'Leary Exchange		Connect with Mark Kelley (N)		CBC News: The National		The Nature of Things		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Situation Room-Wolf Blitzer		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
sports	406	417	27	net	NHL Hockey Ottawa Senators at Atlanta Thrashers. (HDTV) (Live)					Overtime	Sportsnet Connected		Prime Time
	126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI économie	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	400	280	30	TSN	That's Hockey!	NHL Hockey New Jersey Devils at Toronto Maple Leafs. (HDTV) (Live)					NHL Hockey: Sharks at Canucks		
	410	403	52	SCR	College Basketball NCAA Tournament, First Round: Teams TBA. (Live)					College Basketball			
	411	457	56	OLN	Ghost Hunters		Destination Truth		Oper. Repo	Oper. Repo	Ghost Hunters International		Destin. Truth
	417	406	59	SC	NASCAR	NASCAR Hub	Fast Track to Fame (HDTV)		Bullrun (HDTV)		Bullrun (HDTV) (N)		Pass Time
family	554	544	48	TEL	*Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005)				Futurama	King of the Hill	*Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of Ring*		
	557	540	51	FAM	Han. Montana	Suite Life	Sonny Chance	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
	551	542	65	YTV	iCarly	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Hates Chris	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz	To Be Indie	Prank Patrol
cable variety	570	580	29	MM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		mmtop10.ca		Audience With Lionel Richie		Gene Simmons
	615	520	31	A&E	The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV) (N)		Manhunters	Manhunters	Manhunters
	628	584	32	SPKE	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		*Predator* ★★★ (1987, Science Fiction) Arnold Schwarzenegger.				
	521	560	34	TLC	LA Ink (HDTV)		Police Women of Maricopa		Police Women of Maricopa		LA Ink "Gone Too Far"		Police Women
	145	761	35	TV5	Cuisines-Polynésie		Envoyé spécial			Geopolitis	Humanima	Hors série	TV5 Le Journal
	616	521	39	SHO	Relic Hunter		*Voices* (2007, Suspense) Amy Acker.				Cra$h & Burn (HDTV)		Law-Order
	620	523	40	BVO	Storytellers	PhotoXplorers	Innovators	Writers	*Framed for Murder* (2007, Drama) Elisa Donovan, Perry King.				Law & Order
	520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet (N)		Clash of the Dinosaurs (N)		Clash of the Dinosaurs (N)		MythBusters		Daily Planet
	575	583	43	CMT	Amer. Funniest Home Videos		Reba	Reba	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Unstable
	601	562	45	SLC	Rich Bride Poor Bride		X-Weighted "Jamila"		Last 10	Last 10	Chop Shop	Chop Shop	ET Canada
	625	548	46	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Martin	Sarah	Daily Show
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	Law & Order: Special Victims		Seinfeld	Name Is Earl	*Grosse Pointe*
	600	564	49	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Holmes Inspection		House-Bryan	Real Renos (N)	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis		Star Trek: Voyager		Human Target "Baptiste"		Lost "Recon" (HDTV) (N)		Stargate SG-1
	581	566	53	MTV	Peak Season	Cribs	Cribs	Cribs	My Life as Liz	My Life as Liz	Taking, Stage	Made	MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	Reality	Whatever	Family Guy	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	'70s Show	King	Comeback
	522	506	55	HIS	Pawn Stars	Pawn Stars	Ancient Discoveries		Ancestors	Ancestors	Nostradamus Effect		Jobs in Danger
	129	773	60	CD	Biographies (HDTV)		Science du combat (HDTV)		Gangland (HDTV) (SC)		Scènes de crime (HDTV)		S O S (HDTV)
	261	394	61	V	Murder, She Wrote		On the Buses	The Good Life	*The Verdict* ★★★ (1982, Drama) Paul Newman, Charlotte Rampling.				
	602	567	62	W	Supernanny		Love It or List It		Confidential	Confidential	Divine Design	House-Sell	Love It-List It
	269	350	70	APTN	Wapos Bay	By the Rapids	Flame	Moose TV	*Die Hard With a Vengeance* ★★★ (1995, Action) Bruce Willis, Jeremy Irons.				
	621	527	71	TLK	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		The Dr. Oz Show (HDTV)		TMZ
	603	561	95	FN	Ricardo	Chuck-Day Off	Restaurant Makeover		Extreme Cuisine-Jeff Corwin		Ace of Cakes		Restaurant

critics'corner

30 Rock

Liz (Tina Fey) keeps running into Wesley (Michael Sheen), causing her to question their decision. Tracy (Tracy Morgan) frets about his reputation when his children's former nanny writes a tell-all book. Jack (Alec Baldwin) takes steps to secure his position in the new cable company. Jack McBrayer, Scott Adsit and Judah Friedlander also star in the new episode "Don Geiss, America and Hope." 9:30 PM on 15 CITY 9 NBC

Masterworks

One of Canada's most decorated authors, and one of only a handful of Canadian writers regularly published in The New Yorker, Mavis Gallant is a true national treasure — despite not having lived in Canada for more than 50 years. In the 2008 episode "Paris Stories: The Fiction of Mavis Gallant," Montreal-born Gallant — then 86 — and others talk about her life and literary career. 10 PM

Summit scaling new peak for final Twilight
Sources say studio Summit is trying to up its pedigree for its big-screen adaptation of the final instalment of Stephenie Meyer's Twilight series; reaching out to top-notch directors, including Sofia Coppola, Gus Van Sant, and Bill Condon. EW.COM

SECOND CUP
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Who wants to play with new Toy Story?

FILM Play time is over for Woody the cowboy, Buzz Lightyear and friends.

Toy Story 3, which screened Tuesday for theatre owners attending their annual ShoWest convention, poses a new question for the gang from the 1995 hit that launched computer animation into the feature-film world: Is there life for a toy after your kid grows up?

"Come on, let's see how much we're going for on eBay," laments John Ratzenberger's Hamm the Piggy Bank as he and the other toys ponder a lonely future, with their owner, Andy, heading to college and leaving them behind.

Though the film is not yet finished, with much of the animation still in rough form, the screening provided a sneak peek for one of summer's most anticipated releases.

"The youngest kids who saw Toy Story and Toy Story 2 when they first came out are now kind of heading off to college. That's the position Andy's in, so it's very strange and nostalgic for people to see this character that is part of their childhood kind of growing up with them and facing the same life changes," said Toy Story 3 director Lee Unkrich, who was a film editor on Toy Story and co-director on Toy Story 2.

"For anyone who's had a transition in their life — heading off to college, parents sending their kids off to college, people getting out of college and heading off into the workforce.

"The youngest kids who saw Toy Story and Toy Story 2 when they first came out are now kind of heading off to college."
Toy Story 3 director Lee Unkrich

Those are major transitions. Our characters in their own way are dealing with similar transitions," Unkrich said in an interview after the screening.

For Andy's favourite playthings, Woody and Buzz (voiced again by Tom Hanks and Tim Allen), the transition threatens to end their long partnership as the toys argue over what steps would be best for their future.

Due in theatres June 18, Toy Story 3 also features returning voice cast members that include Joan Cusack, Don Rickles and Wallace Shawn. Among new voice co-stars are Whoopi Goldberg, Ned Beatty, Timothy Dalton and Michael Keaton.

Toy Story 3 is the 11th feature film from Disney-owned Pixar Animation, which recently won its latest Academy Award with last year's blockbuster Up. Pixar films have won five of the nine Oscars for feature-length animation since the category was added (the other winners are Finding Nemo, The Incredibles, Ratatouille and WALL-E).

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MATT SAYLES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Toy Story 3 director Lee Unkrich, right, and producer Darla K. Anderson get ready for the film's preview in Las Vegas Tuesday.

Mikkelsen in the cards

Bond villain defying gods in Clash of The Titans

SZONJA KREZINGER
Metro World News

To film fans, Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen will always be Bond villain Le Chiffre — who blew the multi-million dollar poker game in Casino Royale. But in real life the 44-year-old actor is actually a rather good tournament level player. Metro caught up with him at a Unibet tournament in Hungary.

Mads Mikkelsen

Q When did you start playing poker?
A I've played poker for at least 25 years with family, friends, and enemies!

Q What do you enjoy about poker?
A That there are always new situations, things change, and you have to pay attention to everything. Poker is like mathematics, it has strict rules but once we understood them it is like football, you just have to go with the flow.

Q How does it feel like to play at a tournament?
A Much different from simply playing poker. It might last up to three hours and you have to pay attention and be really disciplined.

Q Did your poker skills play role in you getting the as Le Chiffre role?
A No, they chose me as they thought I was a good enough as actor to play the role. It was just a bonus that I play poker.

Q Did the Bond role help your career?
A Of course, a lot. It was fantastic, playing a Bond villain is really something. I was proud of myself and I liked the movie too.

Q Your new movie, Clash of The Titans, is ready for release — what's it like?
A There was an original version made back in 1981 but I never saw it. I think Gods, especially Greek and Nordic Gods, are like us. They have greed, jealousy, love, hate, not just a seat somewhere in the clouds. I play a soldier in the movie who hates the Gods.

Q Ralph Fiennes and Liam Neeson were in the movie too. How many scenes did you share with them?
A I had a scene with Ralph Fiennes but he was hanging up there in the air and I was on the ground… I saw Liam Neeson too, but I mainly worked with the soldiers, very good British and Irish actors.

Q Do you plan to keep acting for Danish cinema?
A Being Danish it is natural for me to act in Danish movies, and it is easier too.

If you treat your boss to a better cup of coffee
are you still late?
Use the coupon above to find out.
SECOND CUP

Simpson finds out true meaning of Beauty

In The Price of Beauty, a new docu-reality series premiering Sunday on VH1, Jessica Simpson and her best friends, CaCee Cobb and hairstylist Ken Paves, travel the world learning the meaning of physical attractiveness as defined by various cultures — and find out blonde bombshell isn't the universal sex symbol. Here are a few other things Simpson found out.

She could never be a runway model

"Going to Paris, I had to walk a runway with all of these tall, skinny models. And I almost puked, I was so nervous," Simpson admits. "I mean, I can walk a red carpet, but walking a runway, I mean, I would be the first to fall on my face. And thank God, I didn't. But I was so nervous to walk out there and be judged, to just put myself out there like that, especially standing next to people that eat just salad."

Good looks are in the eye of the beholder — literally.

"Originally I thought of a Moroccan woman living a repressed life, but after sitting and talking with these women, they're speaking to you through their eyes," Simpson says. "Their souls were just so intense and so beautiful. And, you know, it was all about their peace within and not what they look like on the outside.

AMBER RAY/METRO WORLD NEWS

U.S. judge rules in favour of genetically engineered sugar beets
A U.S. federal judge says farmers can harvest and sell their genetically engineered sugar beets this year. Nearly all sugar beets planted are genetically engineered and the crop accounts for half the U.S. sugar supply. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Urban Foodie

●●●●● INSPIRED; ●●●● VERY GOOD; ●●● PALATABLE; ●● HO-HUM; ● NEVER AGAIN

18 ways to love E18ghteen

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E18ghteen
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(613) 244-1188

Rating: ●●●●½
Dinner & drinks for two: $100

ALL PHOTOS SHARI GOODMAN/FOR METRO OTTAWA

Top: Espresso Roasted Ostrich ($39). Bottom: Beet Salad ($15).

Eighteen reasons to go to Restaurant Ei8ghteen:

1 To taste cuisine by a top Ottawa Chef, Matthew Carmichael.
2 To visit one of the top ten Ottawa restaurants (Ottawa Magazine).
3 To appreciate the passion of Carmichael who inherited his love of food from his grandmother.
4 To consider the influence of Domus' Chef John Taylor on Carmichael.
5 To imagine being a protege of world-renowned chef Susur Lee (Toronto).
6 To speculate about what it takes to be the national winner of Bronze at the Gold Medal Plates Canadian competition.
7 To appreciate the award-winning (Wine Spectator) wine list.
8 To compare wines with one of the wine flights ($36).
9 To enjoy a glamourous, yet unpretentious, restaurant setting.
10 To be surprised by the traditional French cuisine with a twist.
11 To appreciate the visual impact of each plate.
12 To sip a simple Shellfish Chowder ($15) that was enlightened with frothed coconut milk and filled with hearty prawns and mussels.
13 To choose from the varied menu that included a delicious Espresso Roasted Ostrich ($39) served with a soubise sauce.
14 To munch on crispy but tender fries, superb with the Grilled Ribeye ($42).
15 To mull over the tempting dessert choices, and be delighted with the mini domes of Vanilla Flan ($12) with crispy, cinnamon-dusted wontons.
16 To be thankful for small plates, enabling more tasting (even though pricey).
17 To linger over the meal with attentive, albeit unhurried service.
18 To escape the stress of daily life and feel pampered.

Dining out

ZOLAS A well-established Italian restaurant in Bells Corners offers four nine-inch pizzas or pasta dishes along with its famous semolina buns for only $40 plus tax as part of their take-out menu. For those who eat gluten-free, Zolas also makes corn flour penne pasta or soy bean angel hair pasta. 194 Robertson Rd. (613) 721-0227.

TAVOLA RESTAURANT A new Italian restaurant on Merivale is beckoning pasta lovers. In the open kitchen, they make their bread, pasta, sauces and desserts from scratch. Their Salmon PLT with crispy pancetta, lettuce, and tomato sounds irresistible. 1465 Merivale Rd. (613) 224-4442.

SHARI GOODMAN/FOR METRO OTTAWA

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TOP 5 ACCOUNTANTS
RECOMMENDED BY METRO READERS

SYLVIA HAMASHUK
"She has saved me time, money, and headaches MANY times over."

STEVE ERNST
"Simple and straightforward with good honest advice."

KAREN JEROME
"Karen is professional, efficient and knowledgeable."

PETER WALSH
"Will find loop holes to help you get the most you can without putting you at risk of getting you in trouble down the road."

RACHELLE LAFERRIERE
"Excellent service."

NEXT WEEK'S TOP 5 – MOVERS
Recommend your Movers by Friday and
you could WIN A HP MINI 10.1" NETBOOK!
TO ENTER VISIT METRONEWS.CA/GIGPARK
Powered by metro and gigpark

In brief

LEARN how to make Ubriaca (drunken sausage) with Chef Dave Neil of The Piggy Market. Each participant will stuff and twist two pounds of sausage, theirs to take home. The class will be held Monday at The Urban Element from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. $135/person. theurbanelement.ca.

SHARI GOODMAN/FOR METRO OTTAWA

Global Peasant blog online

- Travel along with Diane Thompson's culinary adventures in her Global Peasant blog.
- Check out metronews.ca/globalpeasant for a recipe of June's Lazy Buns.

Looks like a rabbit, eats like a rabbit, it's an ... actress?
Amanda Seyfried sticks diligently to a raw-food diet that she hates, popeater.com reports. "It's intense. And sort of awful," Seyfried says in the new Esquire. "Yesterday for lunch? Spinach. Just Spinach. Spinach and some seeds." METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Spears single ... again

ONE OF HER DANCERS, A PAP, HER AGENT. THIS GIRL MAY NEED TO LOOK FOR LOVE OUTSIDE HER ENTOURAGE Britney Spears has split from her boyfriend Jason Trawick, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The singer reportedly ended her romance with the talent agent at the end of February following a year-long romance because they had been arguing constantly.

A source said, "They were fighting a lot and have not been getting along. They both just needed to take a break from each other. It wasn't working out."

Despite their split, Jason, 38, will still represent Britney through the New York-based entertainment agency, William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, where he works. This isn't the first time the pair have seemingly split. The 28-year-old pop beauty dumped Jason in January after learning he had been flirting with two women at Los Angeles' Roger Room bar before getting back together.

Britney — who has two sons with ex-husband Kevin Federline — and agent Jason started dating in March 2009. They split briefly in August, but soon reconciled.

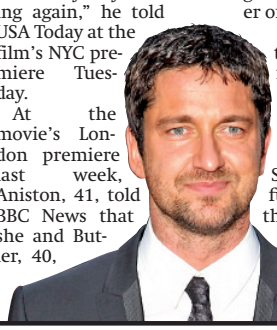
Since their romance began, Jason has proposed to Britney several times.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

His friends envy him

BUT THE LADIES ENVY HER ... A LOT Gerard Butler says he expects Jennifer Aniston romance rumours to continue well after their new comedy The Bounty Hunter opens Friday, usmagazine.com reports.

"It will never be over. If Jen remains my friend, which I hope she will, anytime we would ever hang out in any way will be dating again," he told USA Today at the film's NYC premiere Tuesday.



At the movie's London premiere last week, Aniston, 41, told BBC News that she and Butler, 40, had a "good, fortunate time" shooting.

"We clicked," she said. "It was just easy. There was no kind of pretension to break through. We were instantly like, 'Yeah, I like you!'"

Butler said his friends were jealous that he got to work so closely with the actress, with whom he also gets cozy on the April cover of W magazine.

"I don't think I have to tell you what my friends said when I was working with Jen Aniston," he told BBC News.

"People love her. She's sexy. She's beautiful. My friends hate me that I get to (work with her), and they don't."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Fiercely updating her book

HER NEW HAIR COLOUR IS OF GREAT EDITORIAL IMPORTANCE Kelly Osbourne is revisiting her book Fierce — which also contained self-help advice for teenagers based on Osbourne's own life experiences — to include all the exciting things that have happened to her since it was published last September, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

"Last week I started a rewrite of my autobiography Fierce, which was released last year," she said.

"The publishers and I have decided it could do with updating after everything that's gone on during the past six months, like taking part in Dancing with the Stars, and the cover photo needs changing too — I had black hair then."

Osbourne — who has been in rehab four times to be treated for addiction to painkillers — admits she is more proud of the book than any of her other career achievements.

In the first version of Fierce, Kelly spoke candidly about how she wase addicted to Vicodin by the time she was 17.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Didn't wish for death

BUT SADLY IT FOUND HIM ANY WAY In the week since Corey Haim suddenly and tragically passed away, the outpouring of grief from his friends, family and fans has been massive, popeater.com reports.

GETTY IMAGES

Now, ex-girlfriend Nicole Eggert is speaking out to Life & Style about the actor's troubled life and his drug addiction, in quotes given exclusively to PopEater.

"He didn't want to die," Eggert says in the emotional interview.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

He has real heart issues

MEDICALLY, NOT METAPHORICALLY Michael Lohan has been rushed to a New York hospital for an apparent minor heart attack earlier this week, according to radaronline.com.

Lindsay Lohan's father was in the hospital emergency room but in good spirits, according to his girlfriend Kate Major.

"Right now, they've told him it looks like he had a minor heart attack, but they are still doing tests," Major told the website from the St. Francis Hospital in Manhasset, NY.

This is the second time in two weeks that Lohan has been rushed to the hospital with chest pains.

On March 7, he was taken to a Massachusetts hospital just before he was scheduled to fight in a celebrity boxing match.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Follow these celebrities on Twitter...

CelebTweets

TYRA BANKS doesn't care about the rules anymore, **JAMIE KENNEDY** feels cheated, **HEIDI MONTAG** is easily entertained, and **RUSSELL BRAND** is getting free advice.

@tyrabanks Committed the utlimate model sin: a french manicure. Models are supposed to wear clear polish. But shoot, I'm retired!

@JamieKennedy I have to give my Dr.72 hours notice when i cancel appt, or im charged, but when she canceled on me 1hr before i didn't free extra sesh. Is that fair?

@heidimontag I love the US Coast Guard so much! They have the coolest gazelle helicopters that fly over our house all the time. GO NAVY! love you guys!

@rustyrockets A surgeon who specializes in gender reversal just told me I'd make a good woman and gave me his card, like it was a haircut.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

club metro

METRO OTTAWA would like to celebrate our 5TH ANNIVERSARY by giving you a chance to WIN a...

...HOT TUB FROM CLUB PRO SPAS!
OTTAWA'S LARGEST SELECTION OF HOT TUBS • CLUBPROSPAS.COM

The Caldera Spas C30 hot tub has room for 6 adults to enjoy the 30 massaging jets, cascading waterfall and soothing L.E.D. underwater lighting.

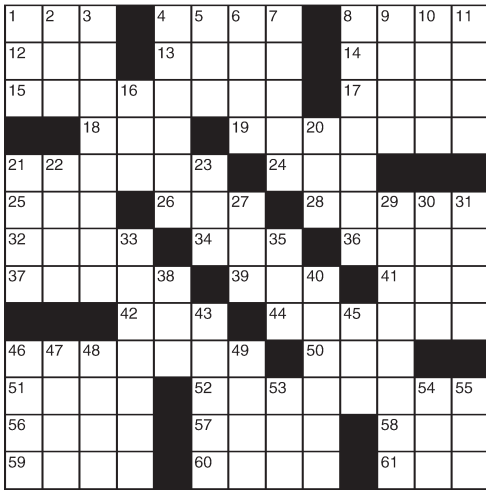
Visit clubmetro.com and enter for your chance to WIN!

Colour is not exactly as shown. To register & for full contest details visit clubmetro.com

The Weather Network
TWN incorporates MSC data
Today Variable 11°/ 2°
Friday Variable 12° / 2°
Saturday Variable 10°/ 0°
You have voted us #1 for best forecasts on TV. Thank you Canada!

For more delicious Metro recipes, visit: **metronews.ca/food**

Take Five



ACROSS

1 Donkey
4 Difficult
8 Clenched hand
12 Cudgel
13 Hodgepodge
14 Formerly
15 Green onion
17 Stench
18 Began
19 Starting at the highest level
21 Diversion
24 Uncooked
25 Here (French)
26 Aries
28 Family branches
32 Fax cover-page word
34 Post-proof abbr.
36 Cry loudly
37 Melodies
39 Grumpy companion?
41 By way of
42 Hiatus
44 Suitor's intent
46 Annual publication
50 Zilch
51 Worms, maybe
52 Bundle of nerves?
56 Wheels of fortune?
57 Duel tool
58 Mine-car contents
59 Paradise
60 Entrance
61 Promptly

DOWN

1 Tummy muscles
2 Pouch
3 Mare's mate
4 Attorney General Eric
5 Foreman foe
6 Laugh-a-minute
7 Recipient's benefactor
8 Network of predatory relationships
9 — -European
10 Garbage barge
11 Sea bird
16 Mainlander's memento
20 — de deux
21 Fissure
22 Beige
23 Online help page
27 Club —
29 Tent at an expo
30 Look-alike
31 Refinery waste
33 Explosive measure
35 Wall Street stat, with "The"
38 — Rafael
40 Eel type
43 Summoned on a beeper
45 Lubricant
46 Competent
47 Positioned
48 Marceau, e.g.
49 Guitar attachment
53 Ultra-modern (Prefix)
54 Acapulco gold
55 Fresh

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

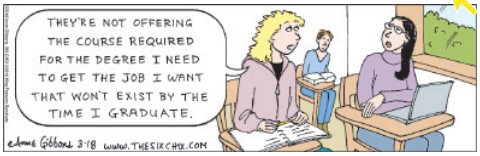
8		4				1		6
	1		3		6		7	
7			1		8			5
		6	5		4	3		
		2	9		3	8		
9			6		1			2
	4		8		2		9	
5		8				7		1

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

8	5	2	6	1	7	4	3	9
7	1	9	3	8	4	5	2	6
4	6	3	5	9	2	8	7	1
5	8	4	9	6	3	7	1	2
3	2	1	7	4	8	9	6	5
9	7	6	1	2	5	3	8	4
2	9	5	8	3	1	6	4	7
6	4	8	2	7	9	1	5	3
1	3	7	4	5	6	2	9	8

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca



Metro Recipe of the Day

PHOTO BY SARAH POMPER

Zucchini and Bean Soup

Submitted by Karen Benevento, Brampton, ON

INGREDIENTS:

3 tablespoons olive oil
2 medium zucchini, cubed
1 medium onion, chopped
1 cup mushrooms, chunked
2 clove garlic, minced
2 teaspoons fresh thyme, chopped
salt and pepper
1 large tomato, diced
1 carton low sodium chicken broth
1 can beans (kidney, chickpea or a mix), drained and rinsed

METHOD:

1. In large pot, heat oil over medium high heat.
2. Add zucchini and cook, stirring often, for about 5 minutes.
3. Add onion, garlic, mushrooms, thyme. Add salt and pepper to taste and continue to sauté, stirring to prevent vegetables from scorching, about 5 minutes.
4. Gently stir in tomatoes. Add broth. Bring to a boil, reduce to simmer and add beans.
5. Simmer until beans are heated through.
6. Serve with rolls or warmed hearty multigrain bread.

SERVES 4

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES

20 minute SUPPER CLUB

20 Minute Supper Club helps you get dinner ready in a snap. Sign up for quick and delicious recipes, cooking and food tips. It's free at **20minute supperclub.com**

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
You will try something totally outrageous today and friends and family may think you have taken leave of your senses.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Someone will give you some excellent advice today, but for some reason you will refuse to take it.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
As a Gemini you are used to doing half a dozen things at once but focus on doing one thing really well, and you'll shine.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Say the wrong thing in the wrong way at the wrong time and you could find yourself out of favour with those who matter.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
Don't be too eager to point out other people's mistakes today or you could make an enemy of someone it would have been wiser to keep on your side.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Be careful if you decide to pass on information that you have heard from a friend or work colleague today. Are you sure it's reliable?

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
You may latch on to someone who appears to know what is going on — they are every bit as confused as you but they make a better job of disguising it.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
The planets indicate that what you are currently worrying about is irrelevant, so focus on what is still good in your world.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
You know what you want but you don't know how to get it. The cosmic picture is unsettled so circumstances may yet change for the better.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
You will use what you know about a rival to put pressure on them today, but don't forget that you have a few weak spots as well.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
You may be tempted to lash out at someone who deserves to be told what you think of them but don't go too far or you may spoil your relationship forever.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Don't rush to get where you most want to go today — take your time and enjoy the scenery as it passes by.

FLIGHT CENTRE Unbeatable
Panama $125* Travel Mar 27 - Apr 4/wg + taxes & fees $230
Paris $194* Travel Jun 10 - Jun 19/ts + taxes & fees $362
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Conditions apply. Ex: *Montreal, USA and international air only prices are per person for return travel unless otherwise stated. Prices are subject to availability at advertising deadline and are for select departure dates. Prices are accurate at time of publication, errors and omissions excepted, but are subject to change. Taxes & fees include transportation related fees, GST and fuel supplements and are approximate and subject to change. ts=transat, wg=sunwing. Head office address: 1 Dundas St W Suite 200, Toronto, ON. Call for retail locations. ONT. REG #4671384 TICO

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This day in history

1850: American Express is founded by Henry Wells and William Fargo.
1893: Former Governor General Lord Stanley pledges to donate a silver challenge cup, later named after him, as an award for the best hockey team in Canada.
1906: Traian Vuia flies the first self-propelled heavier-than-air aircraft in Europe.
1945: Second World War: 1,250 American bombers attack Berlin.
1990: In the largest art theft in US history, 12 paintings, collectively worth around $300 million, are stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Massachusetts.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

MATTAMY homes

Let's Declare The First Nice Day Of Spring As "National Front Porch Day".

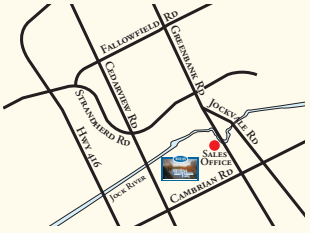
It won't be long now.

If you live in a Mattamy home with a front porch, it's time to tidy up and get the chairs ready because you'll soon have lots of opportunity to say 'hello' to the neighbours who will have all had enough of hibernating.

Front porches are one of the things that make our communities such friendly, enjoyable places to live.

And if you don't happen to have a home with a front porch, we know where you can get one.

Freehold Townhomes From $204,990
Detached Homes From $347,990



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Saturday, Sunday and Holidays 11am-6pm

All illustrations are artist's concept. All dimensions are approximate. Prices, specifications, terms and conditions subject to change without notice. E.&O.E.